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C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 004118

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/22/17
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PARM](#) [KCFE](#) [NATO](#) [OSCE](#) [RS](#)
SUBJECT: U.S. NON-PAPER ON CFE DELIVERED

REF: (A) STATE 116196

Classified By: Political M/C Alice G. Wells. Reasons 1.4(b) and (d)

¶1. (C) SUMMARY. Russian MFA Officials expressed appreciation for the non-paper (timeline) on Adapted CFE ratification and fulfilling the Istanbul commitments (reftel), and agreed to review it carefully and prepare a response for the September 11 meeting between EUR A/S Fried and DFM Kislyak. They noted their desire to continue consultations to resolve the differences over A/CFE. Russian CFE negotiator Vadim Solomenko, however, reiterated that the Istanbul commitments were not directly related to the A/CFE and flank restrictions were unacceptable, argued that inspection and transfer of Gudauta to Georgia would be impossible to achieve due to Abkhazian opposition, and suggested NATO actions lacked specificity. END SUMMARY.

¶2. (C) PolMinCouns delivered ref A demarche and non-paper on August 22 to Andrei Vorobiev, Principal Counsellor in the Department for Security and Disarmament Affairs of the MFA, and Vadim Solomenko, Russian Arms Control Advisor and long-time CFE negotiator. PolMinCouns went through reftel points, stressing that we shared Russia's desire to see the A/CFE Treaty enter into force, and that the non-paper was a serious effort to move the process forward jointly and to achieve Russia's fulfillment of its remaining Istanbul commitments and ratification of A/CFE by NATO Allies. She emphasized that the timeline envisioned meeting Russia's desire for the Treaty to come into force by summer 2008. She added that we had begun consultations with NATO allies on the details of the plan, including with the Baltic States and Slovenia. Using reftel points, PolMinCouns also responded to DFM Kislyak's four additional issues raised during the July 31 meeting between DFM Kislyak and A/S Fried in Washington.

¶3. (C) Vorobiev said the non-paper appeared to develop and even go beyond the ideas discussed in Washington. He said the GOR would study the proposal carefully and discuss it with other Russian government agencies and prepare a response for the September 11 meeting. He asked whether we envisioned holding a meeting at the Director level before then. He said that Russia had not yet consulted with other Treaty members, but would begin to do so at the beginning of September.

¶4. (C) Solomenko then offered his "initial" impressions of the non-paper. He said that he immediately saw several weak points:

-- First, the plan tried to connect the Istanbul commitments with the A/CFE treaty. From Russia's perspective, the substance of Russia's commitments in Moldova and Georgia are not linked to the Treaty itself, including, for example, on the withdrawal of munitions from Moldova. He reiterated that Russia's presence in Moldova was regulated by treaty, and a decision to remove peacekeepers would be a function of Moldovan-Transnistrian relations.

-- Second, even if a fact-finding team were to go to Gudauta and confirm the absence of Russian forces, the Georgians would not accept the conclusions of the team, because the Abkhazians would not permit the GoG to participate in the fact-finding team, and there was no mechanism to effect a "formal transfer" of the facility to Georgian authorities.

-- Third, Solomenko criticized the lack of specificity with respect to NATO actions, asking how many NATO Allies would be willing to start the ratification process? When would the US ratification process begin? He suggested NATO could agree to a new mechanism enabling all NATO members to decide individually when to begin the ratification process.

-- Fourth, Solomenko raised GOR opposition to the flank restrictions, but did not argue the point that western allies were receptive to addressing specific GOR concerns after A/CFE came into force.

Finally, Solomenko said that the non-paper seemed not to include any of the proposals Russia had outlined at the Extraordinary Conference in June, and noted some members' interest in holding another Extraordinary Conference before the end of the year. He acknowledged, however, that the GOR would study the proposals carefully. Vorobiev added that the GOR was in favor of continuing consultations and seeking a way forward.

15. (C) PolMinCouns reiterated that the non-paper was not an effort to revisit disagreements over the links between the Istanbul commitments and the A/CFE Treaty, but to move forward the process to find a solution. The non-paper demonstrated a serious effort by Washington to resolve the differences between us and to achieve the entry into force of the A/CFE Treaty, as well as to respond to Kislyak's request for a fleshed-out proposal. On the issue of Gudauta, she emphasized that the U.S. and Russia could play an important role in facilitating an acceptable solution (together with the Friends of the Secretary-General). On ratification by Allies and the U.S., she underscored that we continued to gather information on the individual ratification processes in CFE member states, but that some Allies would be able to ratify more quickly than others. The U.S. specifically sought to provide the GOR, as suggested by Kislyak, with early evidence of NATO members' intent to ratify; at the same time, as specified in the Timeline, the U.S. would begin consultations with the Senate, which was the normal process for ratification of treaties.

16. (C) Vorobiev undertook to pass the reftel package to Kislyak, who is currently on summer leave.
Melville